

STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING NONTRADITIONAL ENROLLMENT

Recruitment Strategies

- **Issue a personal invitation to a girl to attend a nontraditional class or activity in the class. Let her know you think she has what it takes to be successful.**
- **Create invitations for young women to attend the class or activity and hand them out in the hallway randomly. Invite them to bring a friend.**
- **Make homeroom presentations indicating you are seeking young women who are interested in a nontraditional class.**
- **Put up bulletin board displays in a conspicuous area recruiting young women for the class.**
- **Print flyers recruiting young women to industrial education classes.**
- **Talk with counselors and ask them for recommendations for your class.**
- **Require all middle school students to take a mini-course through the technical education areas.**

Peer Pressure Strategies

- **Recruit popular young women and others will follow.**
- **Recruit young women in friendship groups or from a school club.**
- **Invite young women to explore the technical education area in pairs.**
- **Have young women who are interested recruit their girlfriends.**
- **Give an award to the girl who recruits the most friends.**

Successful Role Model Strategies

- **Presentations by successful female alumni and seniors female students.**
- **Presentations by women in the community in the targeted occupational area.**
- **Student newspaper article with information on the upcoming class that includes an interview with successful female alumni.**
- **Assessment after career exploration.**
- **Job Shadowing.**
- **Tours of labs/technology classes.**
- **Career days/orientation.**

***Adapted from Institute for Women in Trades, Technology & Science (IWITTS)**

RETENTION OF NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS

A key for success in the retention of any student is creating challenging, non-stigmatizing learning environments that meet learners' needs. For individuals pursuing nontraditional programs and occupations (NTO), retention strategies require dissolving stereotypes for traditional gender roles and implementing aggressive outreach measures.

STRATEGIES:

- Send introductory letters to female students in nontraditional programs to welcome them and inform them of the support services available.
- Assist students in identifying one person (relative, friend, instructor) who is supportive of their nontraditional career path.
- Disseminate monthly and quarterly newsletters to all females enrolled in NTO programs.
- Offer shadowing experience with nontraditional workers in the field.
- Encourage student participation in related professional seminars and state and national technical education organizations.
- Offer tutoring to students in NTO programs who may need help with a subject or class.
- Establish mentoring by using NTO role models from the business sector.
- Conduct financial aid workshops for students; discuss how and where to apply for financial aid.
- Provide student support group activities, including informal networking and sharing opportunities.
- Compile an NTO phone exchange list that encourages peer networking and sharing opportunities.

POLICIES:

- Establish a policy to advise students to meet with an advisor before withdrawing from an NTO program.
- Enforce fair and consistent discipline, dress standards, safety regulations, achievement expectations, and grading procedures for all students.
- Sensitize teachers to the effects of bias, stereotyping, and discrimination on students.
- Eliminate any stereotypical instructional materials from the classroom.
- Provide comprehensive career/educational planning sessions by certified professionals in the area of counseling and guidance.
- Develop and/or enforce rigorous attendance requirements.

***Adopted from the Center for Washington Non-Traditional Training & Employment at Edmonds Community College**

GUIDANCE, COUNSELING AND CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

Nontraditional students benefit when they are provided with a comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling program to assist them through their courses and programs, career development, employment readiness and training, and transition into future endeavors.

Guidance and Counseling:

Guidance and counseling refer to a wide selection of services and activities that are chosen and offered collaboratively to help nontraditional students focus on their overall development and to remedy existing concerns.

- **Expose all students to the full range of career, including those nontraditional for their gender, and assist them in determining skills and interests they have which are transferable to nontraditional occupations.**
- **Provide individual counseling and in groups to strengthen skill and confidence, particularly where a culture of gender bias threatens to block success in training and employment.**
- **Arrange job site visits and experimental work experiences to introduce female students to nontraditional careers.**
- **Utilize themes in career fairs, such as Careers on Wheels, Headgear and Construction Expos.**
- **Broaden students' career perspectives by introducing many possible career paths and offer smaller, more numerous career fairs.**
- **Arrange for middle school girls to "shadow" high school girls as they attend advanced math, science, and technical education classes.**
- **Attempt to schedule nontraditional students together in the same clusters of classes.**
- **Introduce students to trade union representatives and orient them to the organizational structure.**
- **Invite nontraditional students working in the field to discuss their challenges and successes.**
- **Provide time to introduce nontraditional students to tools and the workplace environment.**
- **Encourage students to access the Internet and use ware for career interests and aptitudes.**
- **Involve NTO students in leadership opportunities.**
- **Facilitate nontraditional student support groups and designate time for them to meet.**
- **Provide information on general workplace skills that include legal rights on the job and techniques to prevent and diffuse sexual and other harassment.**
- **Provide opportunities for students interested in nontraditional careers to strategize on how to succeed in an occupation dominated by the other gender, i.e. peer support.**

- Bring in speakers on topics such as the local employment outlook, wage and salary information for related careers, and sexual harassment in school and workplace.
- Suggest that youth interview and photograph women and men in the community doing nontraditional jobs.
- Contact female reports at local newspapers and TV stations and invite them to participate on panels where nontraditional career opportunities will be discussed.

Curriculum Integration:

- Plan shop tours for trainees with employers willing to participate in programs.
- Trainees receive first-hand information about possible workplaces, which allow them to distinguish between large and small shops.
- Organize biweekly or weekly support groups, in which women and men are given the opportunity to discuss issues related to training, job search, or their families.
- Women in nontraditional programs/training can benefit from discussions on issues of sexual harassment, their families' reactions to training, childcare, fears, goals, and information about the industry. These meetings also establish strengthen networking among women.
- Plan in-class guest speakers to talk with men and women in training. Show owners and apprenticeship and union officials can serve as resources by speaking on various career opportunities available to successful trainees.
- Foster independence in students by providing assertiveness training and positive self-concept training.
- Provide activities that include meeting motivational futurist speakers, other role models and prospective employers.
- Include opportunities to work in small groups designated to give women and men valuable nontraditional career information.
- Encourage students to take part in a high-tech laser show to experience interactive activities in telecommunications, lasers, robotics, computer-aided drafting, and computer numerical control.
- Help reduce students' fears regarding high anxiety topics, such as computers, math, and science.
- Feature fun activities that incorporate academic learning. Practical exercises can include calculating wallpaper amounts, planning a trip and calculating travel mileage, and planning a budget.
- Focus on the roles of females and males to raise awareness about gender equity issues.
- Challenge students to explore ways in which gender stereotypes affect their lives, especially in the area of career choice.
- Give students an exercise to set goals for their future.

- **Ask students to discuss their feelings and the messages they get from friends, family, and school.**
- **Explore the issues of genders bias and gender-role stereotyping with students through self-assessments.**
- **Use value clarification exercises to help students recognize their personal gender-role expectations.**
- **Discuss the pressures from family, peers, and society to conform to stereotypical gender roles.**
- **Encourage students to create bulletin or display boards, or multimedia presentations on nontraditional occupations to present to student assemblies and events for parents.**

***Adopted from material provided by Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support-Corporate Center East**